

November: Traditions Celebrated During Native American Heritage Month

What started at the turn of the century as an effort to gain a day of recognition for the significant contributions the first Americans made to the establishment and growth of the U.S., has resulted in a whole month being designated for that purpose.

Early Proponents

One of the very proponents of an American Indian Day was Dr. Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca Indian, who was the director of the Museum of Arts and Science



Dr. Arthur C. Parker

in Rochester, N.Y. He persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to set aside a day for the "First Americans" and for three years they adopted

such a day. In 1915, the annual Congress of the American Indian Association meeting in Lawrence, Kan., formally approved a plan concerning American Indian Day. It directed its president, Rev. Sherman Coolidge, an Arapahoe, to call upon the country to observe such a day. Coolidge issued a proclamation on Sept. 28, 1915, which declared the second Saturday of each May as American Indian Day and contained the first formal appeal for recognition of Indians as citizens.

The year before this proclamation was issued, Red Fox James, a Blackfeet Indian, rode horseback from state to state seeking approval for a day to honor Indians. On December 14, 1915, he presented the endorsements of 24 state

Try these traditional Native American recipes this holiday season:

Fry Bread

- 4 cups white flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon baking powder

Combine all ingredients. Add about 1 1/2 cups lukewarm water and knead until dough is soft but not sticky. Shape dough into balls the size of a small peach. Shape into patties by hand; dough should be about 1/2 inch thick. Make a small hole in the center of the round.

Fry one at a time in about 1 inch of hot lard or shortening in a heavy pan. Brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels and serve hot with honey or jam.

Pumpkin and Corn Dessert

- 1 small pumpkin
- 2 ears corn, cut from cob
- 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- Sugar or honey

Peel, seed and slice pumpkin. Cover with water and simmer until tender.

Place corn kernels in pie tin in 350-degree oven; bake for 15 minutes.

Add corn to pumpkin. Add flour, stirring constantly over low heat until mixture thickens. Add sugar or honey to taste. Serve hot.

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governments at the White House. There is no record, however, of such a national day being proclaimed.

State Celebrations

The first American Indian Day in a state was declared on the second Saturday in May 1916 by the governor of N.Y. Several states celebrate the fourth Friday in September. In Illinois, for example, legislators enacted such a day in 1919. Presently, several states have designated Columbus Day as Native American Day, but it continues to be a day we observe

without any recognition as a national legal holiday.

Dispelling the Stereotypes

Stereotypical representations of American Indians are ubiquitous—in the media, in toys, and in books, many of which are found in school libraries and classrooms. Common examples of stereotypes are described here.

•Indians share a common culture, language, and/or physical type.

On the contrary. There is wide diversity among American Indian peoples. Tribes have

distinct histories, cultures, beliefs, languages, and physical characteristics.

•Indian cultures are dead or dying.

Often, the most subtle stereotypes are the most insidious. Many books, both fiction and non-fiction, are written in the past tense, perpetuating the idea that all Indian cultures are of the past, have died out, or are almost extinct.

Fortunately, in recent years, many books have focused on contemporary Indian cultures—expressing their vitality, resilience, and independence. These books describe the gains made by native people in revitalizing their own traditions and demonstrate the challenges of living in a country where European values predominate.

•Indians are primitive and incapable of initiating action or controlling their own fate.

Indian cultures were thriving for hundreds of years prior to the arrival of Europeans, but this is rarely acknowledged, especially in books for children.

•Indians possess spiritual powers and a magical connection to the natural world.

New-agers and spiritual hucksters, with limited understanding and no authority, have tried to co-opt and exploit aspects of native spirituality for their own gains. Some books are products of misplaced ignorance and idealism that insult and demean native ceremonial spiritual values.

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ICSEW:

A Past Chair Shares Her Unique Perspective

By Vicki Rummig
Health and Wellness Chair

I have been involved with the ICSEW almost three years, but in those three years I have not developed a keen sense of the history of the ICSEW and how it has shaped the present. I interviewed Sadie Rodriguez-Hawkins, Assistant Director of Accounting, Office of Financial Management, to help fill in the gaps and gain a better understanding of what the ICSEW has historically been. Sadie's state employment roots were deeply grounded in the ICSEW during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Sadie began her state career at the Office of Financial Management, first as a Governor's college intern, then as an Administrative Trainee. She joined the ICSEW in 1988 and filled a number of roles within the ICSEW over the next six years, including Convener (now known as chairperson) for the Career Opportunities and Professional Enhancement (COPE) sub-committee and later moved on to Vice-Chair, then Chairperson for the ICSEW. In that time she also advanced in her career to the position of State Financial Consultant 1.

The first remarkable thing about my interview with Sadie was her level of excitement as shown in her preparation for our meeting. When I showed up at her office she was looking over a number of items on her table that appeared to be work projects. Soon after sitting down I discovered these items made up her archive of materials related to the ICSEW. In addition to past copies of the *InterACT* and membership



Sadie Rodriguez-Hawkins

rosters, she had a number of reports including *Report of the Governor's Commission on the*

"I doubt I would be where I am today without the support and confidence that the ICSEW gave me."

— Sadie Rodriguez-Hawkins

Status of Women dated December 1963; *Women: Their Changing Work Patterns* published by the Employment Security Department in July 1978; *Report to the President on the Status of Women at Washington State University* from December 1990, as well as a number of annual business reports and various planning documents. This preparation was a true sign of endearment that Sadie holds for the ICSEW.

Through the interview and subsequent review of her archives I discovered a number of interesting items regarding the ICSEW. The most important thing I learned from Sadie was that the ICSEW brought her some of her closest friendships with women she highly respects and continues to associate with today. ICSEW offered opportunities to develop friendships and form life long relationships. She was quick to show me a picture taken in

Washington, D.C. with her and a number of other ICSEW women. This may have been due in part to the Networking Guide that she helped develop. The Networking Guide not only contained professional information about each member, but hobbies and interests as well. The purpose of the guide was to "paint a picture of members," both personal and professional. I was also fascinated to learn about the Fall Reception that took place after the New Member Orientation meeting at the Governor's Mansion. The reception included tea, cookies, and personal appearances by the Governor and First Lady. Sometimes, group

photos were taken to commemorate the event. What a memorable way to truly feel a part of

the Governor's administration!

Three major changes in business practices of the ICSEW became apparent in our conversation. The first of these was awareness that there used to be a Legislative sub-committee that would review proposed legislation that had an impact to women's issues and make recommendations to the Governor's Office. This function of the ICSEW was contingent on having a member that understood the legislative process and how to read a bill. However, as a Governor's committee representing state employed women, it seems this function should be an integral part of the ICSEW.

In March of each year the ICSEW celebrated National Women's History Month. For example, in 1991 this was celebrated through displays at the Capital Rotunda and General Administration
See "Perspective" on last page—

Health & Wellness Corner

Help Kids Deal with Holiday Stress

Whatever our beliefs and traditions, the winter holidays are heartfelt and full of promise. Our families will be together and happy; the children will be good and grateful; our partners will be gracious mind readers; we will have enough time and enough money; our spirits will be filled with peace and love.

Or not.

More likely, say the experts, the common holiday experience of adults and children alike will be stressful.

For children and young adults, unspoken anxieties can have deadly consequences. Counselors report that this is the time of year when students may be most likely to experience serious crises and to commit or attempt suicide—with the last day or two before the actual Christmas and winter holiday break being the most crucial time.

For adults, especially parents, navigating the Christmas season and winter holidays—coping with disrupted work and caretaking schedules, and stretching to achieve the ideal images bombarding them from every TV screen and store shelf, on top of already hectic routines—can leave nerves and emotions scattered like so much glitter off a card. In the best case, happy holidays often means managing the magic with a migraine.

But Indiana University South Bend education professors J. Vincent Peterson and Janette Shaw offer some strategies to combat stress and help make the season pleasantly memorable.

“We must be able to acknowledge that although we cling to the idea

that the family will spend the holiday together, everyone will get along and it will be wonderful, with a good dinner and the gifts that everyone wants, it’s a rare family that gets together two or three years in a row with the same members present and in the same

of year we have to take care of ourselves if we are going to take care of others,” he said. “Breathing deeply, exercise, good nutrition, a positive attitude, time management, remembering to make time to enjoy the uniqueness of our family, relaxation,

of withdrawal and depression, and really work to keep the lines of communication open,” said Peterson. “But parents need to know that they can and should call for help, to a school counselor before the break or to a community mental health center, as soon as they think a situation may be beyond their ability to handle.”

Volunteer activities can provide opportunities for older teenagers who have little money of their own, but great resources in time and energy that they want to use as contributors to the holiday spirit.

For younger children, Shaw suggested that parents develop peer groups and work out a networking support system in the neighborhood, through the workplace or church, for quality day care and activities suitable for their ages.

Even though young children are still deep into the fantasy of the season and believe in the possibilities of what might happen, they are not immune to stress.

“Young children especially need to get out of the house or apartment for regular full-body exercise to work off stress,” said Shaw.

“Children are stressed because they have no control,” Shaw said. “They see Mom going haywire and all kinds of activity going on, and they are often dragged along on shopping expeditions or taken to events over which they have no control.

“I also would say to avoid sugar, of course,” she said, “but that wouldn’t work for me, so why would I expect it to work for kids? It’s the holidays, after all.”

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BE NATURAL: The key to surviving the holiday season

- B — Breathe** deeply, it will help increase energy levels.
- E — Exercise:** 20 minutes, three times a week—and running from errand to errand doesn’t count!
- N — Nutrition:** Three well-balanced meals each day.
- A — Attitude:** Negative attitudes are contagious and destructive. Try to see the glass half full.
- T — Time management:** Set priorities and don’t take on more than you can handle.
- U — Uniqueness:** Recognize and treasure your own uniqueness. Say ‘no’ when necessary.
- R — Relaxation:** Private time to read or listen to music—a time not to focus on the next item to do.
- A — Associations:** Maintain contact with nurturing support systems—colleagues, friends, family.
- L — Laughter:** Still the best medicine.

circumstances” he said. “Rather than a simple time, it’s a complex time, especially with the wide spectrum of families we have now.

“Another common denominator is grief. There are so many underlying issues, losses such as the death of a family member, or a pet, or divorce, a job loss, or a move away from friends or family, that affect us,” he added. “Our society expects us to grieve quickly, to put on a ‘smiley face,’ but it’s really a process that we need to go through, no matter that it’s the holidays.”

So what’s a parent to do? In this season of hype and hoopla, Peterson suggests BE NATURAL. “It’s a simple acronym to remind us that especially at this time

associations with various support systems, and laughter—those are key ingredients to keeping healthy and managing stress.

“Remember that what your family and your children really want most is to spend time with you.”

A major concern for working parents is keeping older children and teenagers constructively engaged during the holidays and over school breaks when they may be at home unsupervised. Helping them become gainfully employed would be a high priority.

“With older children and teenagers, who are more aware of the hassles the holidays may bring, parents need to watch for signs

Perspective

Continued from 2nd page—

Building and in 1992; International Women's Day Celebrations took place in Olympia and Seattle.

The ICSEW also hosted a number of events called "Brown Bags."

These were short, informational seminars held over lunchtime for folks to attend. Sample "Brown Bag" topics included Developing Your Career Pathway, Women's Issues in the 1988 Legislature, Balancing Career and Personal Lives, Preventing Back Problems, Easy Holiday Decorations, and so on. These activities helped demonstrate the level of participation of women in ICSEW sponsored events.

Important women's issues in 1992 included: health, dependent care; financial planning; retirement planning; training and education; networking and promotional opportunities; flexible work hours, and sexual and racial harassment. While some issues remain important today, new issues emerge as time passes: Single parenting, hunger, class disparity (no more middle class), balance of work and personal life, education, and safety are frontrunners today. Many issues affect both men and women. I asked Sadie her view on whether the issues of yesterday still hold true with the same magnitude today. We spoke specifically on the issues of wage disparity between men and women. She felt that things are much improved today compared to what our fore'mothers' faced.

We also discussed the difference in "Take Our Daughters to Work Day." The reasons for holding the event have changed as well as its usefulness. Sadie reflected on the time when it was thought that women could only be teachers, nurses, and secretaries and is delighted that we have moved to a

place where we can be all that and more.

At its inception, Take Our Daughters to Work Day gave new ideas on potential jobs for women. But as job opportunities cross gender lines, the value of Take Our Daughters to Work Day has shifted toward an emphasis on giving all our children a sense of the working world.

The changes in issues points to the need for the ICSEW to remain flexible to adequately address issues of today, rather than dwelling on the way things used to be.

Sadie says her biggest accomplishment in the ICSEW was initiating a fresh evaluation of the organization. She gave the image of a "dry-bones" feel. It felt as though no one was feeding the organization. At the time, the state was having financial trouble and as a result the bi-annual conference had been cancelled. Many members were not actively engaged in learning, sharing, and teaching one another; they seemed content to simply attend meetings. Members were asked for input around what the ICSEW should do to turn it around and add value to the committee—Business as usual was seen as a risk. This was a difficult process as people fear what is different, but the ICSEW needed leadership that wanted to take the ICSEW to a new place. The process was not comfortable for many, but in the end the results paid off. New life was instilled in the membership and the group continued to thrive.

As our conversation came to an end, we wondered whether this type of evaluation should continue on a regular basis if the ICSEW is to evolve and meet the needs of tomorrow.

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